REMARKS

Claims 1 through 12 are pending in this application. Claims 3 and 8 have been withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1, 2, 4 and 9 through 12 stand rejected. Claims 5 through 7 have been held allowable subject to their presentation in a form appropriately independent of rejected parent claims. In response to the final Office Action, dated April 10, 2003, claims 1 and 11 have been amended. Care has been exercised to avoid the introduction of new matter. Entry of the Amendment and allowance of the application are respectfully solicited.

Claim 11 has been rejected under the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112 for lack of antecedent basis for the phrase "the metal interconnection line." This phrase was intended to refer to the shunting interconnection line of claim 1. To clarify the claim recitations, claims 1 and 11 have been amended to recite the shunting interconnection line. It is believed that a cursory reading of the amendments would lead to a conclusion that the claims comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112. Entry of the Amendment and withdrawal of the rejection is, therefore, respectfully solicited.

Claims 1, 2, 4 and 9 through 12 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. patent 5,903,492 (Takashima). The statement of the rejection, set forth at paragraph 5 of the Office Action, reads the claim elements on Fig. 145 of the reference. Favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully solicited.

Claim 1, the only independent claim recites, *inter alia*, the following:

> a plurality of main word lines . . . disposed in a first conductive layer . . . ;
> a plurality of shunting interconnection lines, provided . . . in a second conductive layer formed under said first conductive layer . . . .

The Office Action asserts that Takashima discloses the arrangement of placing the shunting interconnecting line below the main word line in the arrangement of Fig. 145. In particular, the claimed second conductive layer has been correlated with Takashima's gate electrode line, and the claimed shunting interconnecting line with Takashima's extracting line SNAP. Signal line SNAP is an output metal interconnection line coupled to a sub decoder and is connected to a gate electrode line at a center thereof through a contact. Takashima intends to speed up the driving of a selected sub word line to a selected state, as compared to direct driving of the gate electrode interconnection line by the sub decoder.

In the arrangement of Takashima, as shown in Fig. 145, a single metal interconnection structure is employed and a metal layer is a single layer. Specifically, in the interconnection layer indicated at #5 by the Office Action, a main word line, sub word driver output line and the extract interconnection line SNAP are located. The conductive layer indicated at #3 by the Office Action is the gate electrode interconnection line and the sub word line is placed thereon. The gate electrode interconnection line is below the metal interconnection line. Such structural relation is clearly described on col. 71, line 52 et seq. of Takashima. Therefore, Takashima places the shunting interconnection line SNAP above the gate interconnection layer and at the same interconnection layer as the main word line.

As described above, Takashima's arrangement does not satisfy the claimed relation of a shunting interconnection line provided in a second conductive layer formed under the first conductive layer. The present invention efficiently utilizes the metal interconnection layers in a multi metal interconnection structure. Takashima neither

teaches nor suggests the arrangement of the shunting interconnection line below a main word line. Therefore, it is submitted that Takashima neither discloses nor suggests the subject matter required by claims 1, 2, 4 and 9 through 12.

Entry of the Amendment and allowance of the application are respectfully solicited.